

Central Coventry Fire District

Board of Directors

June 17, 2008 - 7:00 pm

Central Coventry Fire Station 4

Agenda

1. Call to Order – 7:01 pm

2. Roll Call

President: Girard Bouchard – VP: Joe Bonn (7:11 pm)

Anna Mae Lapinski - Linda Giguere - Ron Gizzarelli - Robert Crowe

Clerk: Tracy Hall

Treasurer: Tom LaColle

Tax Collector: Jeanne Graemiger

Chief Seltzer

Not Present - Elaine Hunt, Asst Chief Tucker

**3. Approval of Minutes of the previous Board of Directors Meeting –
5/20/08**

Motion to Approve: Anna Mae Lapinski Seconded: Linda Giguere

All Vote Aye

4. Old Business

Info on Insurance for Call Personnel

Rate for Call Personnel will not change significantly. VFIS suggested we cut off the weekly payments going to Call F/F who was injured on

duty. We can drop this payment because he has finished with his surgery and physical therapy. We would be liable for his medical payments but currently his medical insurance is covering those. We should take the precaution of verifying that his physical therapy is complete. Also Chief Seltzer will check with Attorney Hogan, who worked with us on the merger, to insure there is no retribution.

5. President's Report

Mr. Bouchard visited Station 5 everything seemed happy. He also visited with the Fire Marshal who is happy with his situation. Contract negotiations are very nearly completed.

Motion to Accept: Anna Mae Lapinski Seconded: Ron Gizzarelli

All Vote Aye

6. Chief's Report

Chief Seltzer presented his report and also made a presentation regarding staffing issues. His recommendation is to hire four additional firefighters to have ten firefighters on duty per shift for three engines and two rescues. Currently we have nine per shift with the ninth firefighter as a floater. In a few years we will want to look at putting floaters on again as the new firefighters start to accumulate vacation time, overtime costs will start to rise. We will have to work with the Treasurer to see when it becomes more cost effective to hire floaters than to pay overtime. There also will be a need to have

another administrative person to cover Training/EMS/Safety. This firefighter would be assigned to regular weekday staff. Chief Seltzer also suggested, if we were to move in this direction, that we run the six active call firefighter thru the testing process and rank them as we would anybody else and offer them the jobs first. We have invested money and time into them and we would know what we were getting. Also there has been talk about the expense of having call personnel in this way we could take that money and put it into hiring them.

Mr. LaColle asked what the affect would be with no rescue at Station 7. Chief Seltzer replied that Engine 7 would be equipped for Advanced Life Support so there would be no change in life safety.

Mr. Gizzarelli asked if there have been any incidents where we didn't have a truck from Coventry responding. Chief Seltzer answered that there was a couple accidents that West Greenwich handled. Mr. Gizzarelli suggested this may be a good statistic to keep track of.

Mr. Bouchard asked if we proceed as suggested we would hire four new firefighters now. Chief Seltzer commented that as one way. We could also hire two this year and two next year depending on how the budget is. Mr. Bouchard asked if it was possible to do as the Chief suggested with nine firefighters per shift instead of ten. Chief Seltzer replied that it was possible if you filled the other spot with overtime. He would have to sit with the Treasurer to see when it would be most cost efficient to hire another person vs. overtime. Mr. Gizzarelli asked that the Chief keep the staffing presentation open and keep adding statistics to it. Mr. Bouchard agreed and asked that it be put under Old Business and considered when budget time comes. There was

some additional discussion regarding the timing and number of firefighters to hire per year to stretch the costs out over several budget years and stagger hiring to avoid mass retirements.

Motion to Approve: Ron Gizzarelli Seconded: Robert Crowe

All Vote Aye

Mr. Bouchard recommended that the Chief continue on his suggested course of action for hiring the administrative assistant.

In regards to the new hire that was brought up last month and no action was taken Mr. Bouchard makes a motion for Chief Seltzer to continue with the hiring process for the new candidate. Mr. Crowe asked if the candidate had been interviewed. Chief Seltzer replied that there were six department members on the interview panel in December this candidate is the next on the list.

Motion to Approve: Girard Bouchard Seconded: Linda Giguere

All Vote Aye

7. Treasurer's Report

Mr. LaColle presented his report. We are projected to come in just under budget but that is only a projection using known expenses. He feels we will not have to borrow as collections have been excellent and we have good cash on hand.

Motion to Accept: Robert Crowe Seconded: Joe Bonn

All Vote Aye

8. Tax Collector's Report

The legal accounts that were left have been sent to the attorney for certified letters. A Tax Sale will be scheduled depending on the actual date the attorney sends the letters as there is a timeframe specified by law.

The bill for service from Opal has come in at the expected amount of \$2,500. Postage has gone up so to purchase envelopes with postage for mailing the tax bills it will cost \$3,760.

Mrs. Graemiger received a letter requesting abatement of interest from a taxpayer who did not receive her bill because she had changed her address after the bills had been printed. She has lived in town for 20 years. She did not report that she had not received her bill until March, after the 2nd quarter was due. Her information was provided to the District Clerk to be sent a letter denying the abatement. Mrs. Graemiger also received a letter from Commerce Park asking for changes in valuations of property by the Fire District as the Town is changing the valuations. As there are past due amounts dating back to 2004 the letter has been passed on to our tax attorney for review.

The new office is 6 months old now. There are a few issues they have found. The heating and cooling systems need some work. It was very cold in the winter and has been quite warm lately. Chief Seltzer will check into the air conditioning issue. There is also an issue with not enough parking. Her suggestion was to mark some of the spaces for Tax Collector/Fire Marshal use. Chief Seltzer will look into that as well.

Motion to Accept: Linda Giguere Seconded: Joe Bonn

All Vote Aye

9. New Business

10. Introduction of new business to be considered at the next Board Meeting

11. Good & Welfare

A letter was received by the District from Edward Streker reiterating his request for a Veteran's exemption and a frozen valuation. Also he requests to come before the Board to present his case. Mrs. Hall will send a letter to inform him he may come to any district meeting to speak to the Board and give him the date of the next meeting.

Mr. Bouchard wanted to notify the Board that the State of RI had recently contacted Chief Seltzer to interview for the open position of State Fire Marshal. He came in 2nd and so did not get the position. He did not apply for the position but was head hunted for it. Mr. Bouchard wanted to congratulate him on having the credentials that encouraged the State to seek him out.

Mr. Gizzarelli commented that the meeting actually made it into the Kent County Times newspaper and even though we didn't have any more people attend the meeting he was glad to see it posted there.

Mr. Gizzarelli also said he was hearing grumblings of the possibility that a taxpayer could end up paying more in fire tax than town tax due to the exemptions offered by the town that we do not offer. Mrs. Graemiger, as well as several others, did not feel that this was

possible due to the large difference in the tax rates between the Fire District and the Town.

Mr. Crowe asked about progress on the building on Hill Farm Rd. Chief Seltzer replied that he has had a discussion with Colonel DaSilva but no action has been taken.

Mr. Gizzarelli asked about a Reserve/Emergency Fund. Mr. LaColle said that he should bring that up during the budget process.

12. Adjournment – 8:22 pm

Motion to Accept: Linda Giguere Seconded: Anna Mae Lapinski

All Vote Aye